USDA, SCS
Section II-E
Technical Guide
Area 25

GRAY SANDY LOAM
RANGE SITE DESCRIPTION
PE 19-31

Land Resource Area: Rio Grande Plains

Location: _____

Date: 1/1/72

1. TOPOGRAPHY AND ELEVATION: This site occurs on nearly level to gently sloping areas. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent, mostly less than 2 percent.

2. SOILS:

   a. The soils are deep with calcareous sandy clay loam or fine sandy loam surfaces and highly calcareous sandy clay loam or clay loam subsoils. Permeability of the subsoil is moderate. Available water holding capacities are moderate. Due to the high lime content, this site tends to be droughty.

   b. Some soil taxonomic units which characterize this site are:

      Hidalgo sandy clay loam
      Copita fine sandy loam

   c. Specific site location:

3. CLIMAX VEGETATION:

   a. The climax plant community is an open grassland with scattered mesquite and brush throughout the landscape. The understory is dominated by grasses such as tanglehead, trichloris, and plains bristlegrass. The site usually supports some climax forbs and legumes and some woody plants.

RELATIVE PERCENTAGE

Grasses	90%	Woody	5%	Forbs	5%
Tanglehead, Two and fourflower trichloris	15	Mesquite, Whitebrush, Blackbrush		Annual forbs	2
Arizona cottontop, Pinhole bluestem	10	Spiny hackberry, Vine ephedra		American snout-bean, Bundleflower, Sensitivebriar	3
Sideoats grama, Green sprangletop, Lovegrass tridens	5	Condalia sp., Calliandra, Lime pricklyash, Paloverde, Texas persimmon, Cactus, Desert yaupon, Texas kidneywood	5	Snoutbean sp., Bushsunflower, Orange zexmenia, Gaura	
Fall witchgrass	5	Texas ebony	T		
Plains bristlegrass	20				
Nash & hooded windmillgrass	15				
Curlymesquite, Buffalograss, Vine-mesquite	5				
Pink pappusgrass	10				
Perennial threeawns, Slim tridens	5				

b. As retrogression occurs, whitebrush, blackbrush, mesquite, spiny hackberry, and cactus may form a dense canopy. Some common invaders on the site are croton, ragweed, tumblegrass, perennial broomweed, and grassbur.

c. Approximate total annual yield of this site in excellent condition ranges from 2000 pounds per acre in poor years to 4000 pounds per acre of air-dry vegetation in good years.

4. WILDLIFE NATIVE TO THE SITE: This site is used by deer, dove, quail, and javelina. Several of the woody plants, forbs, and grasses which grow on the site provide good cover, browse, mast, and seeds for game birds and animals.

5. GUIDE TO INITIAL STOCKING RATE:

a.

Condition Class	Climax Vegetation	Ac/AU/YL
Excellent	76-100	16-20
Good	51-75	21-24
Fair	26-50	25-30
Poor	0-25	31 +

b. Seeded areas

	Percent Ground Cover			
	100-76	75-51	50-26	25-0
Introduced species	14-18	18-22	22-31	30 +

RELATIVE FORAGE QUALITY OF SPECIES 1/

a. Cattle

Primary	Secondary	Low Value
Feathery bluestem	Curleymesquite	Most annual forbs
Arizona cottontop	Buffalograss	Mesquite
Two & fourflower trichloris	Slim tridens	Whitebrush
	Pink pappusgrass	Condalia sp.
Lovegrass tridens	Sedges	Cactus sp.
Sideoats grama	Plains bristlegrass	
Bundleflower	Low Panicums	
Desert yaupon	Nash & hooded windmillgrass	
	Vine ephedra	

b. Deer

Primary	Secondary	Low Value
Most annual forbs	Texas wintergrass	Bitterweed
Bundleflower	Sedges	Whitebrush
Low panicums	Blackbrush	Mesquite
Plains bristlegrass	Calliandra	Paloverde
Spiny hackberry	Cactus sp.	
Desert Yaupon	Lime pricklyash	
Texas kidneywood	Most grasses	
Vine ephedra		

c. Javelina

Primary	Secondary	Low Value
Mesquite beans	Blackbrush	Most annual forbs
Persimmon fruit	Whitebrush	
Cactus sp.	Vine-mesquite	
Yucca	Spiny hackberry	
Vine ephedra	Snoutbean	

c. Dove and Quail

Primary (Seed of the following:)	Secondary	Low Value
Ragweed	Desert yaupon fruit	Bitterweed
American snoutbean	Most grass seed	Blackbrush
Panicum grass		Whitebrush
Bushsunflower		Mesquite
Bundleflower		
Croton		
Bristlegrass		
Vine-mesquite		

1/Definitions of terms and an explanation of interpretations is given on a separate page which is attached or submitted with each group of range site descriptions.

Legend and Definitions for Range Site Descriptions.

1/ This rating system provides general guidance as to animal preference for plant species. It also indicates possible competition between kinds of animals for the various plants. Grazing preference changes from time to time and place to place depending upon the animals, upon plant palatability and nutritive value, stage of growth and season of use, relative abundance, and associated plants. Grazing preference does not necessarily reflect a plant's ecological place in the climax plant community.

The following definitions apply to cattle, sheep, goats, deer, and antelope grazing.

Primary: These species generally decrease when the climax plant community is subjected to continuous heavy grazing pressure by the animals listed.

Secondary: These plants usually increase initially, then decrease when the site is subjected to continuous heavy grazing use by the animals listed.

Low Value: These plants continue to increase or invade with heavy continuous grazing use of the site.

For squirrel, peccary, and birds the terms primary, secondary, and low value indicate species preference only. They do not indicate plant response to feeding pressure, nor do they have any ecological significance.